



Complete Summary

TITLE

Patients' experience with their general practice consultation: overall mean Consultation and Relational Empathy (CARE) score among patients who completed the CARE measure.

SOURCE(S)

Mercer SW. The CARE measure. Glasgow: University of Glasgow; 2004. 2 p.

Measure Domain

PRIMARY MEASURE DOMAIN

Patient Experience

The validity of measures depends on how they are built. By examining the key building blocks of a measure, you can assess its validity for your purpose. For more information, visit the [Measure Validity](#) page.

SECONDARY MEASURE DOMAIN

Does not apply to this measure

Brief Abstract

DESCRIPTION

This measure is used to assess the overall mean Consultation and Relational Empathy (CARE) score among patients who completed the CARE measure.

RATIONALE

Clinical encounters between patients and health care professionals are the core activity of medical care. Increasing attention is being paid to patients' views on care and the consultation, and to developing a more holistic, patient-centered approach. Empathy is considered to be a basic component of all therapeutic relationships and a key factor in patient's definitions of quality of care. Empathy has been demonstrated to enhance the doctor-patient relationship and to improve patient enablement, and patient and doctor satisfaction in clinical encounters.

The Consultation and Relational Empathy (CARE) Measure has been developed as a process measure of the consultation, based on a broad definition of empathy.

Empathy in this clinical context has been described as the ability to communicate an understanding of a patient's world and to act on that understanding in a therapeutic way. The aim of developing the CARE measure is to provide a tool for the evaluation of the quality of consultations in terms of the 'human' aspects of medical care. By basing the measure on process rather than outcome, it provides doctors with direct feedback of their relational empathy, as perceived by their patients. For this reason, it has utility not only in research, but also as a tool for self-audit and has recently been accredited for use in General Practice (GP) appraisal and in Scotland.

PRIMARY CLINICAL COMPONENT

General practice; consultation; patient perspective; relational empathy

DENOMINATOR DESCRIPTION

Total number of patients who completed the Consultation and Relational Empathy (CARE) Measure

Note: Questionnaires with more than two missing values or 'Not Applicable' responses are removed from the analysis.

NUMERATOR DESCRIPTION

Overall mean Consultation and Relational Empathy (CARE) score

Evidence Supporting the Measure

EVIDENCE SUPPORTING THE CRITERION OF QUALITY

- A formal consensus procedure involving experts in relevant clinical, methodological, and organizational sciences
- One or more research studies published in a National Library of Medicine (NLM) indexed, peer-reviewed journal

Evidence Supporting Need for the Measure

NEED FOR THE MEASURE

Unspecified

State of Use of the Measure

STATE OF USE

Current routine use

CURRENT USE

Internal quality improvement

Application of Measure in its Current Use

CARE SETTING

Ambulatory Care
Physician Group Practices/Clinics

PROFESSIONALS RESPONSIBLE FOR HEALTH CARE

Physicians

LOWEST LEVEL OF HEALTH CARE DELIVERY ADDRESSED

Group Clinical Practices

TARGET POPULATION AGE

Unspecified

TARGET POPULATION GENDER

Either male or female

STRATIFICATION BY VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Unspecified

Characteristics of the Primary Clinical Component

INCIDENCE/PREVALENCE

Unspecified

ASSOCIATION WITH VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Unspecified

BURDEN OF ILLNESS

Unspecified

UTILIZATION

Unspecified

COSTS

Unspecified

Institute of Medicine National Healthcare Quality Report Categories

IOM CARE NEED

Getting Better
Living with Illness
Staying Healthy

IOM DOMAIN

Patient-centeredness

Data Collection for the Measure

CASE FINDING

Users of care only

DESCRIPTION OF CASE FINDING

Patients who completed the Consultation and Relational Empathy (CARE) Measure

DENOMINATOR SAMPLING FRAME

Patients associated with provider

DENOMINATOR INCLUSIONS/EXCLUSIONS

Inclusions

Total number of patients who completed the Consultation and Relational Empathy (CARE) Measure

Note: Questionnaires with more than two missing values or 'Not Applicable' responses are removed from the analysis.

Exclusions

Unspecified

RELATIONSHIP OF DENOMINATOR TO NUMERATOR

All cases in the denominator are equally eligible to appear in the numerator

DENOMINATOR (INDEX) EVENT

Encounter

DENOMINATOR TIME WINDOW

Time window is a single point in time

NUMERATOR INCLUSIONS/EXCLUSIONS

Inclusions

Overall mean Consultation and Relational Empathy (CARE) score

Exclusions

Unspecified

MEASURE RESULTS UNDER CONTROL OF HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS, ORGANIZATIONS AND/OR POLICYMAKERS

The measure results are somewhat or substantially under the control of the health care professionals, organizations and/or policymakers to whom the measure applies.

NUMERATOR TIME WINDOW

Encounter or point in time

DATA SOURCE

Patient survey

LEVEL OF DETERMINATION OF QUALITY

Not Individual Case

PRE-EXISTING INSTRUMENT USED

Unspecified

Computation of the Measure

SCORING

Non-weighted Score/Composite/Scale

INTERPRETATION OF SCORE

Better quality is associated with a higher score

ALLOWANCE FOR PATIENT FACTORS

Unspecified

STANDARD OF COMPARISON

External comparison at a point in time
Internal time comparison

Evaluation of Measure Properties

EXTENT OF MEASURE TESTING

The Consultation and Relational Empathy (CARE) Measure was included in a self-completed questionnaire study involving 3044 patients attending 26 General Practitioners (GPs) in 26 different practices (16 in areas of high socio-economic deprivation and 10 in low deprivation areas, in the west of Scotland).

GPs and patients, in both high and low deprivation settings, endorsed the relevance of the CARE Measure. Overall, 76% of patients rated the measure as being 'very important' to their current consultation. Higher ratings of importance were observed in older patients, patients consulting with psycho-social problems, patients with long-standing illness or disability, and patients with significant emotional distress. Few patients rated individual CARE Measure items as being 'not applicable' to their current consultation; only 3.1% of patients felt that more than 2 of the 10 items in the measure did not apply to their current consultation. Mean values were not influenced by deprivation, gender, reason for consulting, chronic illness, or emotional distress. Correlational analysis indicated that a sample size of 50 patients is sufficient to reliably estimate mean CARE score for an individual GP.

EVIDENCE FOR RELIABILITY/VALIDITY TESTING

Mercer SW, McConnachie A, Maxwell M, Heaney D, Watt GC. Relevance and practical use of the Consultation and Relational Empathy (CARE) Measure in general practice. *Fam Pract* 2005 Jun;22(3):328-34. [14 references] [PubMed](#)

Identifying Information

ORIGINAL TITLE

The Consultation and Relational Empathy (CARE) Measure.

MEASURE COLLECTION

[Consultation and Relational Empathy \(CARE\) Measure](#)

DEVELOPER

Mercer, Stewart W., BSc, MSc, PhD, MBChB, MRCP

FUNDING SOURCE(S)

Unspecified

COMPOSITION OF THE GROUP THAT DEVELOPED THE MEASURE

Unspecified

FINANCIAL DISCLOSURES/OTHER POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Unspecified

ADAPTATION

Measure was not adapted from another source.

RELEASE DATE

2004 Jan

MEASURE STATUS

This is the current release of the measure.

SOURCE(S)

Mercer SW. The CARE measure. Glasgow: University of Glasgow; 2004. 2 p.

MEASURE AVAILABILITY

The individual measure, "The Consultation and Relational Empathy (CARE) Measure," is available from the [University of Glasgow Web site](#).

For more information, contact: Dr. Stewart Mercer, General Practice and Primary Care, Division of Community-based Sciences, University of Glasgow, 1 Horselethill Road, Glasgow G12 9LX; E-mail: Stewmerc@blueyonder.co.uk.

COMPANION DOCUMENTS

The following are available:

- Mercer SW, McConnachie A, Maxwell M, Heaney DH, and Watt GCM. Relevance and performance of the Consultation and Relational Empathy (CARE) Measure in general practice. *Family Practice* 2005, 22 (3), 328-334. This document is available from the [University of Glasgow Web site](#).
- Mercer SW, Watt, GCM, Maxwell M, and Heaney DH. The development and preliminary validation of the Consultation and Relational Empathy (CARE) Measure: an empathy-based consultation process measure. *Family Practice* 2004, 21 (6), 699-705. This document is available from the [University of Glasgow Web site](#).

NQMC STATUS

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